

# THE MOUNTAINEER.

"DO WHAT IS RIGHT, LET THE CONSEQUENCE FOLLOW!"

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## THE MOUNTAINEER

EVERY SATURDAY.

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JAMES FERGUSON, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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ADVERTISING.

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Original Poetry.

BATTLE FOR THE RIGHT.

As—'We're coming, Sister Mary.

Let freedom's banner float; its broad folds

pridefully wave,

In the valleys of the mountains, in the refuge

of the brave.

God is our shield; and buckler; God is our

strength and might;

And, daring death or danger, we'll battle for

the right.

Chorus.

We'll bravely do our duty, with heart and

soul and might;

And, daring death or danger, we'll battle for

the right.

Chorus.

Shall we sell our souls for Mammon? Shall we

betray life for gold?

Shall we count as naught the precious things

these latter days unfold?

Shall we sell our souls in thoughtless ease, in

indolence and sloth?

Or, we, because of mortal's acts, at God and

truth repine?

Do our hearts and hands grow weary? are we

tempted to repine?

Let's say ourselves, God will fulfill his purpose

divine.

He hastens on the joyful day when far o'er

land and sea,

A King in righteousness shall rule a people

great and free.

Let's not forget our future hopes in the cares

of mortal life.

Although opposing elements wage unremitting

strife,

Life is made up of duties, we may not idly

rest;

Who earnestly must surely try to act

his part the best.

EMERY H. MERRILL.

Selections.

A PANTHER STORY.

BY A GUIDE.

This night the camp talk turned upon

panthers. Maybe a hooting wakened by

the sargos surroundings of the cruel

power was haunting their old caves,

suggested the topic. The guide described

the cry of the panther as a sound that

could shake the stoutest heart; sometimes

the piercing, rending yell of baffled rage,

at others a prolonged, doleful wail, as

of a woman lost in the woods. An ad-

venture of Cheney, the fearless Nimrod

of the Adirondack, with one of these

insidious plumes (denizens of the forest,

as related to the party by Tunny, is worth

repeating. Many of the secluded lakes

in this region are frequented by the otter.

It is, besides, a frolicsome creature, and

has a curious practice of "siding." It

chooses a deep declivity ending in the

water or upon the ice, and there they are

wont to enjoy the diverging "slides" for

hours together.

Early one winter morning, Cheney vis-

ited the "slide," but, lo! a stealthy hun-

ter of the otter had anticipated him, for

there, in the snow, was the broad track

of the panther. The lesser game was

instantly forgotten in the fighting excite-

ment of a dangerous chase. At once he

hurried back for his stout old bow, re-

turned, and before noon was alone upon

the track. The boldest hunter will own

that there is more peril than pasture in

this chase for the alert fox is certain to

very soon send the pursued, when it has

been of taking to the tree, casting its

trail, and waiting for its pursuer at ad-

vantage. The panther's spring has become

a proverb of quickness, and against its

agile and wonderful strength, at close

quarters, a weapon is of little avail. But

this once, its craft was opposed to a sag-

acity never hood-winked, a vigilance never

surprised. The hound was trained in

many a chase, and as well aware as his

master, of the character of the foe before

him. Cheney held his trusty confidant

in check, keeping him steadily only a few

yards in advance, never allowing him out

of sight, and at a moderate pace pushed

on. Two or three hours of tardy, patient

tracking were over; not a bush, tree, or

rock escaped the hunter's jealous scrutiny.

Yet he relied mainly upon the acute in-

sight of the dog to apprise him of the

proximity of the panther; and the noble

hound this day proved for the thousandth

time, that his master's trust was well

placed; for behold! the noble animal be-

gan to test the laden air by prolonged

sniffs, to hesitate with fore foot lifted, to

look backward, and bespeak his master's

attention with low whinnings. These ac-

tions signalled the vicinity of the panther.

Seeing his pursuers, the crafty animal

and, as his habit is, stopped and taken

cover. Now all the hunter's nerve and

circumspection was put to the keenest

test; a rod further, and he might be

under the eye of the hidden panther, and

instantly be faced by its overwhelming

spring. Besides, the hunter being in mo-

tion, and this foe in cover, the latter pos-

sessed a dangerous advantage in point of

discovery. The aching suspense of such

a moment must have been almost intol-

erable. At this moment a timid hunter

would have given his ear to the sugges-

tions of prudence, or of that fear which

sometimes bears such a name, and quietly

"backed out." As for Cheney, this har-

rowing suspense only strove to sharpen

his nerves of tried steel. Always

keeping in the shelter of a tree, he crept

on a few rods farther.

By this time, the bound, with back

bristling, and uttering low moans, came

back to his master's feet; no urging could

force him to move on a single foot with-

out his master. Cheney was sure that at

that instant he could not be a dozen rods

from the panther; indeed, he was certain

that the crowded jam of hemlock before

him was the cover. The hunter felt at

that instant that the ferocious beast was

only waiting to catch him clear from the

shelter of the protecting trees to make a

spring. The hunter felt himself sheltered

behind his stronghold, an enormous hem-

lock, and coolly made ready for the final

scene of the lonely but terribly exciting

drift. He planted his hatchet in the

snow, freshly capped his weapon, and got

a second charge of powder and lead ready

to hand. Now, all ready, keeping his

body sheltered, he begins to search inch

by inch, and foot by foot, the dense mass

of hemlock before him. He knows his feline

fellow-actor is there. Yet so perfectly

was the panther hidden, that for a tortur-

ing half hour the hunter strained his eyes

in vain. Suddenly a quick whine from

the bound hugging his feet, startled him;

following the dog's riveted gaze a moment,

let the dim outline of the savage by slow,

blood-chilling degrees grows upon the

hunter's view, developing, as it were, into

shape from the dense mass of hemlock

spray! The panther was hugging close

to a giant limb in the fork of a tree,

scarcely a hundred feet distant. It was

motionless, save its yellow eyes, which

now began to scintillate like sparks of

fire. It was not a moment for hesita-

tion. The hunter took a single stride from

his shelter, caught a sight, and with the

quickness of thought fired. The ball

meant for the creature's head only broke

his shoulder. The smoke of the discharge

had not yet risen; the panther's crouching

scream of pain had scarcely risen from

the forest still before Cheney was sheltered

and ready to try again.

Until the panther was met by an unex-

pected shot, it will hardly ever spring. But

the wounded animal was emitting

piercing cries, and its powerful tail was

rapidly lashing its flanks. Against the

hunter stopped; it was but a moment's

glance, yet he saw the flaming eyes, the

stretched and foam-dripping jaws, the

ivory-white claws that riveted themselves

into the great branch upon which the

panther lay. The rifle-ball was quick-

er than the panther's spring, for just as it

struck back upon its haunches for the

bound, the missile, this time true, smote

it fairly between the eyes. The shot was

instantly fatal; its steel-sprung limbs re-

laxing, and the keen claws loosening their

grip in the wood where they had been

half-buried, the panther fell crashing

through the branches at the hunter's feet,

dead.

After "Toney's tale," it was not a

thought to fall complacently asleep upon

that we were this night in the once fa-

vorite retreat of this animal. However, the

fire was tempered with wool, and a rudely

blaze aided to dissolve the incubus of fear

that had crept upon the listeners during

the guide's story.

TALK ABOUT PRUNING.

As the season of the year is just at

hand when many who yet adhere to the

old, though not commendable, practice of

Spring pruning, will be sharpening their

tools for the annual "trimming," we beg

leave to mention a few leading principles

lying at the base of this operation.

In the outset, it may be safely said that

there is altogether too much pruning

done; or, at least, that it is performed

with too rough and careless a hand. It

is scarcely more a light matter to a tree

to have its large branches lopped off,

than for a man to have an arm ampu-

tated. The body of an animal has no re-

dundancy, no surplus parts which may be

removed, and the main structure continues

just as vigorous as before. May we not

infer, therefore, from analogy, that every

part of the vegetable is needed to pre-

serve its health, and to enable it to fulfil

the designs of nature?

All observing gardeners know that the

several parts of a tree or plant are closely

connected, and that one portion cannot be

injured without at the same time injur-

ing others. Cut off, or mar a branch, and

once a portion of the root feels the blow

and suffers from it. So, if you cut off a

root, the injury is felt among the branches.

Not is this surprising, if, as some say, the

branch is only an extension of the root,

every bud above ground having a corre-

sponding bud or rootlet below. But where

this exact balance of parts exists or

not, there is, without question, a nice

sympathy and correspondence of growth

and health between them. If I prune the

top of a tree closely for several successive

years, I do in fact prune the roots also, and

vice versa. If a tree has an abundance of

leaves, it has, and must have, an abun-

dance of roots.

Hence we see why we are directed to

prune a hedge in midsummer, if we wish

to restrain its growth and keep it station-

ary. Pruned in Spring, there is no loss

of foliage, but a rapid determination of

sap into the remaining buds, (to restore

the balance between root and branch,) and

hence a vigorous growth. Hence,

too, we see why it is better to transplant

small trees than larger ones. The first

can be taken up with little mutilation of

root and branch, and when again set out,

they go on their way almost as if they

had not been disturbed. The latter can-

not be unearthed without cutting off and

mangling many of their roots, and so in-

terrupting derangement and disease into

the whole structure. Something can be

done, it is true, toward restoring the equi-

librium of the parts, by cutting off a large

portion of the branches at the time of

transplanting; but this gives the tree an-

other severe shock; it deprives it of a

large part of its elaborating organs, and

so, between the double shock, it is a long

time before it recovers (if it ever does)

from the severe injuries.

The effect of injudicious pruning may

be seen in almost every orchard. How

many a large limb is lopped off, and the

stump, not being properly protected from